

## Message Text

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44

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01

IO-13 SCCT-01 /084 W

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R 261205Z JUL 76

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1364

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 257

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UK, EI

SUBJECT: JOINT STATEMENT ON UNIONIST PARTY/SDLP TALKS

REF: BELFAST 236 AND PREVIOUS

1. FOLLOWING TEXT ISSUED JULY 23 BY ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY REPRESENTS JOINT STATEMENT BY REVEREND MARTIN SMYTH AND CAPTAIN AUSTIN ARDILL FOR THE (OFFICIAL) UNIONIST PARTY AND JOHN HUME AND PADDY DEVLIN FOR THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP): QUOTE. THE CONSERVATIONS BETWEEN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY AND THE ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY HAVE CONTAINUED IN A FRANK EXAMINATION OF THE WAY TO BRING DEVOVLVED GOVERNMENT TO NORTHERN IRELAND AGAIN. THERE HAVE BEEN WIDE AREAS OF AGREEMENT INCLUDING THE FACTS THAT A LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IS NECESSARY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND AND THAT ITS PEOPLE BE FULLY REPRESENTED IN ALL THE DEMOCRATIC FORUMS. THEY WERE UNITED IN AGREEING THAT THE DEVOLVED PARLIAMENT MUST HAVE GREATER POWERS THAN THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY WITH A CORRESPONDING REDUCTION IN THE POWERS OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

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THE CRUCIAL POINT, AS EVERYONE REALISED, IS THE METHOD OF FORMING THE EXECUTIVE AND ON THIS ISSUE THERE REMAINS A DEEP DIFFERENCE OF VIEW. NEVERTHELESS THE CONVERSATIONS HAVE PROVIDED AN OCCASION FOR FACE TO FACE DISCUSSION AND THE PROMOTION OF UNDERSTANDING. CONSCIOUS THAT SUCH DIALOGUE REPRESENTS THE ONLY WAY OUT OF THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND AND IN SPITE OF THE DEEP DIFFERENCES AND DIFFICULTIES, THE PARTIES ARE PLEDGED TO PURSUE THE PATH OF CONSTITUTIONAL POLITICS. THIS PATH MAY BE LONG BUT IS MORE HOPEFUL THAN THE ALTERNATIVE OFFERED BY THE MEN OF VIOLENCE WHICH CAN ONLY LEAD TO DEATH AND DESTRUCTION. END QUOTE.

2. IN SEPARATE STATEMENT UNIONIST PARTY INTERPRETED PHRASE "....FULLY REPRESENTED IN ALL THE DEMOCRATIC FORUMS" AS INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES AT WESTMINSTER AND CALLED ON GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION TO REVIEW THE NUMBER OF NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUENCIES ON A SCALE AND BASIS SIMILAR TO COMPARABLE AREAS OF REST OF U.K. JOHN HUME OF SDLP REJECTED THIS INTERPRETATION AND SPECIFIED PARTY POLICY CONTINUED TO BE" .....IF THERE WAS FULL REPRESENTATION FOR THE PEOPLE IN A DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT, WE WOULD BE ADEQUATELY REPRESENTED AT WESTMINSTER WITH THE PRESENT NUMBER (12) OF MPS."

3. CONGEN BELIEVES PARTICIPANTS IN TALKS HAVE NOT MET TOGETHER SINCE FIRST WEEK IN JULY AND THERE NO FIXED SCHEDULE FOR RESUMPTION OF TALKS. TALKS WERE USEFUL FOR CERTAIN FRINGE PURPOSES INCLUDING REAFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT FOR DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT, DEMONSTRATION THAT TWO SIDES COULD TALK PREVIOUSLY AND AMICABLY AND EMERGENCE OF REVEREND MARTIN SMYTH AS POSSIBLE MORE MODERATE COUNTER-BALANCE TO IAN PAISLEY AS PROTESTANT POLITICAL FIGURE. THE ESSENTIAL AGREEMENT, ON FORMING AN EXECUTIVE, WAS NOT ACHIEVED HOWEVER AND THERE ARE NO PROPOSALS TO SUBMIT FIRST TO HMG THEN TO ELECTORATE. IF MEETINGS DO RESUME THEY WILL PROBABLY NOT DO SO BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1. DEVLIN IS AWAY AND MARTIN SMYTH WILL VISIT UNITED STATES IN AUGUST.SPICER

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